

Unit B: Passenger Conduct

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What is Good Conduct?

Discussion: Discuss the importance of student behavior and safety on the bus.

Promoting good behavior is necessary and is an important part of the safe operation of a school bus. Bus drivers should not expect all passengers to behave like adults. Drivers sometimes fail to realize that students are young people who are in periods of physical and emotional development with all the challenges associated with exploration and adjustment, and that they require guidance and understanding regarding their behavior.

Discussion: Do children at different ages behave differently and react differently to discipline?

I. How Can the School Bus Driver Promote Good Conduct?

1. The key to success with students is to have a professional, friendly, positive, and concerned attitude toward them.

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2. The driver can promote self-discipline and provide the necessary group direction for the passengers by understanding the factors that affect discipline.

- Attitudes
- Drivers
- Students
- Temperament
- Discipline method
- Rules
- Time of day
- Time of year
- School bus “climate”
- Student expectation

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3. The keys to success:

- Be professional
- Be Friendly
- Stay Positive
- Show Concern
- Be firm, but fair

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II. Steps for Good Management

- Informing the students of the rules and regulations and reasons they exist
- Applying the rules and regulations fairly and consistently
- Developing a friendly and helpful attitude.
- The driver should present his/herself as one who also follows rules and regulations
- Patience and timing are also important tools, but do not expect to solve all problems the first time they arise
- Good conduct equals safety
- Follow School Board Policies

Note: School Policies

Always follow local school policies for student conduct. Explain the school’s policies regarding student conduct the first day of school.

Note: Provide trainees with a copy of the division’s local policies regarding student management.

Why is Good Conduct Needed?

Students need to know how to control their actions. Their conduct has a direct bearing on the safety of each individual on the bus. The driver cannot operate a bus safely and stop frequently to discipline the students.

Knowing how their actions affect others gives the students a better rationale for why conduct/safety is important.

Discussion: Discuss how discipline problems may affect the safety of the busload.

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III. Rules for Student Conduct

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An informal atmosphere which encourages pupils to relax and enjoy the ride is desirable. The following instructions should be given.

1. Students should load and unload the bus in a reasonable manner.
2. Students should proceed quickly and quietly.
3. Students should not crowd or push.
4. Students should show regard for safety.
5. Students should be quiet and should not distract the driver.
6. Students should not shout or become involved in other boisterous activities.
7. Students should not talk with the driver while the bus is in motion except in an emergency.
8. Students should show consideration for others. The bus driver needs to concentrate on driving and not be worried about disruptive activity on the bus.

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9. Students may be assigned seats – Follow local policy.
10. Students should stay seated while the bus is in motion. They should go directly to their seats after boarding the bus and remain seated until the bus reaches its destination and has stopped.
11. Students should not destroy or damage the school bus.
12. No part of the student's body should be outside the windows.
13. Students should not throw litter or other objects while riding the bus. You may wish to place a trash container in the bus; however, it should meet specifications or be approved by Department of Education personnel.
14. Students should not obstruct an emergency exit with any object. Students should not place their feet on the seats or in the aisle.

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15. Prevent behavior problems before they develop:
 - a. The driver should act in different ways with different age groups.

- b. Troublemakers who create problems should receive attention as soon as possible.
- c. When disciplinary action is required, the bus should be stopped in a safe place and secured, the ignition turned off, and the key removed.
- d. The driver should respond calmly and firmly.
- e. Students should not be discharged at locations other than their designated stops.

Remember: If the possibility of the disruption is eliminated beforehand, the problem won't occur.

IV. Pupil Behavior Related to Safety

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Discussion: Discuss what situations put school bus drivers most at risk.

1. Students should be encouraged to follow instructions promptly and quickly.
2. They should be on time at the bus stop.
3. They should not play on the road when waiting for a bus.
4. They should follow correct safety procedures when walking on the highway to and from a bus stop.
5. They should be on time at the bus loading area at schools.

V. Discipline Problems and Reporting Procedures

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1. To maintain discipline on a bus, the driver must use common sense. Practicing common sense discipline will enable you to have a safe, orderly bus and the confidence and respect of your pupils.
2. Do not take the misbehavior personally.
3. Be courteous.
4. Be calm and control your temper.
5. Be responsible.
6. Be firm.
7. Be interested in the students.
8. Establish standards of behavior for yourself.
9. Never hesitate to correct behavior problems and always be consistent with the punishment.

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10. Never punish the whole group for an individual's behavior.
11. Never promise corrective action without meaning it.
12. Never use profane language.

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13. Never argue.
14. Never use physical force.
15. Never put a child off the bus.
16. Have a working relationship with supervisors.

Discussion: Discuss the appropriate procedures for documenting and retaining student information, including but not limited to school bus discipline reports and other forms of student information.

17. Unacceptable Student Actions or Behavior (See Local Policy):

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- a. Loud and abusive language
- b. Fighting and other acts of violence
- c. Pushing, shoving, or running down the aisle
- d. Throwing objects
- e. Possession of weapons, alcohol, tobacco or drugs
- f. Lewd behavior
- g. Sexual harassment
- h. Vandalism
- i. Not staying seated
- j. Bullying

Discussion: Discuss harassment policies as well as all policies that address inappropriate contact between students and staff.

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If problems occur, immediate action should be taken. When an emergency situation develops, the bus should be stopped and parked in a safe location off the road. Notify the proper authorities. The bus is not to be started until the call is answered, or communication is complete. **Never put an unruly student off the bus.**

In case of habitual misbehavior, report the student to the proper authority and ask that some type of action be taken to resolve any issue that may jeopardize the safety of others.

Remember: The key to success is to have a positive attitude toward students.

VI. Passenger Seating

School buses are an extremely safe form of transportation. School buses use the principal of compartmentalization to protect its passengers; therefore, proper seating is very important. The bus' interior seats are designed to passively protect its passengers.

8VAC20-70-40 Seating.

The number of pupils who may ride a school bus shall be determined by the total number who can be seated on the seat cushion facing forward, safely seated within the seating compartment. This number cannot exceed the manufacturer's capacity. Pupils riding in school buses required by federal law to be equipped with passenger restraint belts shall wear them as required by state or federal law while the bus is in motion.

Note: Compartmentalization: FMVSS 222 requires all school buses/MFSABs to offer this passive protection system of closely spaced seats with high, padded, flexible backs. In a frontal crash, the seat back absorbs energy of passengers propelled forward against it from behind.

Unit Review

1. A student's conduct has a direct bearing on the _____ of each individual on the school bus.
2. You should prevent behavior problems before they _____.

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3. The keys in successfully promoting good student conduct are:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| a. _____ | d. _____ |
| b. _____ | e. _____ |
| c. _____ | |

4. You should inform the students of the _____ and _____ and reasons they exist.

5. You should follow your division's _____ when imposing discipline.

6. When an emergency situation develops you should park the bus in a _____ location off of the roadway.

7. You should present yourself as one who follows _____ and _____.

8. School buses use the principal of _____ to protect its passengers.

9. Passengers must be _____ seated within the seating compartment.

10. Drivers must have a _____ attitude towards students.

Answers

1. safety
2. develop
3. be professional, be friendly, stay positive, show concern, be firm but fair
4. rules, regulations
5. policies
6. safe
7. rules, regulations
8. compartmentalization
9. properly
10. positive